

An interview with Louis A. Wailly

LOUIS A. WAILLY

An Interview Conducted by

William B. Pickett

June 15, 1981

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NARRATOR DATA SHEET

06/15/81

DATE

Name of narrator: Louis A. Wailly

Address: 1930 Hendricks St., Terre Haute Phone:

Birthdate: December 7, 1903 Birthplace: Bruay, France

Length of residence in Terre Haute: Since 1921 - 60 yrs.

Education: Clinton, Indiana--4th grade

Occupational history: 1916, started in mine in Clinton. Worked at Columbian Enameling & Stamping from 1923 to 1931. Went back into mining with two other individuals--owned own mine south of Cloverland in Clay County for approx. 4 years. In 1941, worked in Dresser mine until it closed.

Special interests, activities, etc. Mining and trucking. Watch TV. Raised five girls and three boys.

Major subject(s) of interview: Coal mining in Vigo and neighboring counties.

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Interviewer</u>
06/15/81		At Mr. Wailly's residence	William B. Pickett

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LOUIS A. WAILLY

Tape 1

June 15, 1981

At Mr. Wailly's residence, 1930 Hendricks Street,
Terre Haute, Indiana 47804

INTERVIEWER: William B. Pickett

TRANSCRIBER: Kathleen M. Skelly

For: Vigo County Oral History Project

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WBP: I'm William Pickett and I'm in the home today of Louis A. Wailly. This is June 15, 1981, and his address is 1930 Hendricks Street, Terre Haute, Indiana.

Mr. Wailly came to Vigo County from . . . or I guess maybe to Clinton, Indiana from Bruay, France. He has been a resident of Terre Haute since 1921. During that time, he was a coal miner; he worked at Columbian Enameling & Stamping Co., Inc.; and he also owned a mine for a period of time. And he in addition trucked coal during the Depression.

Mr. Wailly, how did you happen to come to the United States from Bruay, France.

WAILLY: Well, I come with my folks. I was . . . let's see . . . 18 months old, and I come with them, of course, and came from France to Mecca.

Do you know where Mecca is?

WBP: Mecca, Indiana?

WAILLY: Yeah, Mecca, Indiana. And we lived there a couple years. And from there we moved to Brazil. My dad worked in block coal in Brazil. Then from Brazil we went back to France in 1912 and came back in 1915. That was during the war World War I. We were in the war zone there from, well, 1914 when it first began -- you know, the war -- until 1915. And we come back on the . . . I don't know. That boat was a small boat, you know, because they had all the other big boats . . . I guess, the government took them over for the war. I don't know.

But anyhow it took us 21 days to come across the Atlantic.

WBP: Did your father come to the United States in
19 . . . what year did he come? In 19 . . .

WAILLY: He come back in 1913.

WBP: But when he first came . . .

WAILLY: When he first came it was . . . he came in 1904.

WBP: When you were an infant?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And did he bring you and your mother?

WAILLY: And we came here in 1905.

WBP: O.K. You came over later?

WAILLY: Yeah. Nineteen /hundred/ five.

WBP: I see. He came in 1904 and then you came and
joined him in 1905.

WAILLY: In 1905. Yeah.

WBP: Did you have any brothers and sisters who came
with you?

WAILLY: Well, my brother I had an older brother
that came with us. Well, he didn't come with us
because He come with us the first time, see?

WBP: In 1905.

WAILLY: In 1905, yeah.

WBP: And then you and your family were here in the
United States from 1905 until when?

WAILLY: Until 1912.

WBP: Nineteen /hundred/ twelve, all right. And then
you returned?

WAILLY: We returned in 1912, yeah.

WBP: Do you know why your father came in 1904?

WAILLY: Well, yeah. He come here to go to work in the coal mines there in Mecca.

WBP: All right. And why did he . . . so, he was a miner. Was he a miner in France?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And did he have friends who told him about there being a job over in the mine here in Mecca?

WAILLY: Well, he knew a coal operator here by the name of Alley. I don't know how to even spell his name. Ed Alley.

WBP: I see. And so, that's why he came over. He came over to work in Mecca. And then he worked at Brazil in the block coal?

WAILLY: Yeah. He worked in Brazil.

WBP: Did he . . . did the mine run out in Mecca? Do you know?

WAILLY: Well, I imagine it did because we moved from Mecca to Brazil, you know.

WBP: All right.

And do you know why he returned to France in 1912?

WAILLY: Well, (heh!) he got repatriated and the family too.

WBP: You mean they shipped him back?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Because he was an illegal immigrant?

WAILLY: Oh, no, no! He wasn't illegal, but he thought he was gonna stay. You know he was gonna work . . . well, he did. He worked in a coal mine over there while he was there. He didn't like it too well, so he came back to the United States.

WBP: You mean he went back to France in 19 . . .

WAILLY: In 1912.

WBP: To work in a coal mine over there?

WAILLY: Yeah. We all went back in 1912, see?

WBP: All right. Sure. He took you all back.

WAILLY: The whole family. And in 1913, why, he came back over here. (chuckles) He didn't like it.

WBP: Well, now you said there the war . . . did the war break out and you were in the war zone?

WAILLY: Yeah, in 1914, see, yeah. We were in the northern part of France, see, and . . .

WBP: Was that in . . . did you go back to Bruay?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: And so, after the war broke out, then you came back to the United States?

WAILLY: Well, no, we were there in the war zone just about 11 months, see? And it was during the war that we come back, during World War I, see? To this country.

WBP: All right. So you came back in 1915, then.

WAILLY: Nineteen hundred fifteen, yeah, when we come back.

You know the kids I went to school with here in Brazil, when we come back, you know I couldn't even understand them and couldn't talk English?

WAILLY: Really! In just that length of time. And . . .

WBP: Between 1905 to 1912 you had learned English,
in other words.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Did your parents speak English?

WAILLY: Well . . .

WBP: A little bit?

WAILLY: Oh yeah. Yeah. Well, not real plain, but they
talked pretty good English, yeah.

WBP: And you'd learned English from 1905 to 1912.

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah, but no longer than we were there --
just three years you know in France -- we forgot the
language. All the kids . . . well, you see there was
five girls -- my five sisters -- and myself. And the
kids I went to school with there in Brazil, my aunt
who could hardly speak English, she had to interpret
for me. Honest, I couldn't even (laughs) talk
English any more, or understand them!

WBP: Could you speak French now?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Are you bi-lingual?

WAILLY: Well . . . not too good. I don't speak French
too good any more. Understand it all right, but we
don't talk in French any more.

WBP: But by 1915 you had five sisters?

WAILLY: Five sisters.

WBP: And how many brothers?

WAILLY: One.

WBP: One brother.

WAILLY: Um hm.

WBP: And they all came with you then when you came in 1915? They came . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, we all come back. No, my dad was already here, see. He had come first, and he didn't stay very long, my dad, in France.

WBP: You mean, the whole family went back to France in 1912?

WAILLY: Twelve, yeah.

WBP: And then he returned to the United States?

WAILLY: He returned to the United States when he was there only about ten months.

WBP: I see! So, he returned . . .

WAILLY: He didn't like the conditions there.

WBP: He returned to the United States in 1913 then. He returned to the United States in 1913.

WAILLY: Nineteen /hundred/ thirteen, yeah.

WBP: So, he returned before the war broke out and then you and your mother and sisters and brother . . .

WAILLY: My sisters, yeah, we were there.

WBP: . . . all returned after the war broke out because you were in the war zone. Do you remember anything about that?

WAILLY: Oh, my gosh, yes!

WBP: The war?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: What was . . . was it scary . . . frightening and were there . . .

WAILLY: Well, no. Not frightening, but it was continual

WAILLY: noise. But I want to tell you something.

Christmas Eve there, during the war . . . do you know that they stopped the war? It was so peculiar that we could hear the rumble of the cannon and so on, you know.

WBP: Christmas Eve.

WAILLY: Christmas Eve. Yeah. We were going to church. Of course, we went to a Protestant church and . . .

WBP: In Bruay?

WAILLY: In Bruay, yeah. And, by golly, it . . . the war just stopped. Honest!

WBP: No kidding!

WAILLY: Yeah. And that was so peculiar. /We were/ just young kids, see, but, oh, man, it was something! You know. Really, it stopped!

WBP: Yes.

Did your brother go off to war? Did he fight?

WAILLY: Well, yeah, he fought here in the United States Army, yeah.

WBP: But he didn't fight . . . he was too young to go to war then.

WAILLY: He didn't go back with us to France.

WBP: Oh, he didn't?

WAILLY: He stayed here, yeah. In fact, you would . . . do you remember Pancho Villa . . .

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: . . . in 1915, '16. Well, he was in the army then, in the cavalry.

WBP: I see. He was with /General/ Pershing.

WAILLY: With Pershing. Yeah.

WBP: Pershing when he went across the Rio Grand . . .

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: . . . in pursuit of Villa. Pancho Villa.

WAILLY: Yeah. Do you know what? Then he got to be interpreter for some of the people, you know, in the army in the higher ups, you know. He was a First Lieutenant himself. [Interpreted English into French.]

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: In the United States Army. And it become pretty nice for him that he could interpret, you know.

WBP: You bet, you bet.

WAILLY: For the officers.

WBP: Well, that's . . . you remember the noise of the war. Do you remember the artillery barrage? Did you see the destruction of war, too? Did the Germans come through your city?

WAILLY: No, no. Well, it was [an] open town, but they never did come right in our . . . it wasn't a city. We was in a village.

WBP: Were you in a combat zone? Were there trenches around your . . . where you were?

WAILLY: Not right close to where we lived. Maybe about two miles from where we lived.

WBP: Did you see casualties? French casualties?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah, yeah. Oh, good heavens, yes! Sure. Yeah.

WBP: And so they would come . . . the French army would come through and bring their artillery.

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, it wasn't only the French army. The Africans and so on were fighting with France, you know.

WBP: Uh-huh.

WAILLY: Yeah. The airplanes, too, you know. At night you weren't allowed to even strike a match. They'd court martial you, really!

WBP: I see. Was part of your village destroyed?

WAILLY: No. No.

WBP: Good. That was fortunate.

WAILLY: The next village was destroyed. We lived in what they call Alicoure and the next town was Béthune. And it was destroyed.

WBP: Can you spell that . . . ?

WAILLY: Béthune? No, I don't think I can.

WBP: All right. We could probably . . .

WAILLY: Aw, let's see. B-e-t-h-u-n-e.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Béthune. And the "e's" got an accent aigu . . . on top of it.

WBP: Do you remember whether you came back because of . . . mainly because of the war or because your father was earning enough money so that he could afford to have you back?

WAILLY: Yeah, that's it.

WBP: Was it both things?

WAILLY: It wasn't on account of the war, no, because we were . . . you know . . .

WBP: He could afford to bring you back to the United States?

Wailly: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Do you know whether or not he planned to bring you to the United States permanently? Or did he . . .

WAILLY: Oh, yeah, yeah, he planned that.

WBP: He wanted to live in the United States?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: He didn't want to live in France? He didn't want to return to France later on?

WAILLY: No, no. No. Oh, maybe for a visit! But then . . .

WBP: But he wanted to move . . . emigrate to the United States?

WAILLY: Yeah, right.

WBP: Did he want to when he came in 1904 . . . when he first came over?

WAILLY: Um hm.

WBP: He wanted to emigrate but wasn't able to at that time maybe? I don't want to . . . I'm just trying to . . .

WAILLY: You mean did he want to go back to the old country from here?

WBP: Well, what I wanted to know basically is, did he come to the United States to find work or did he come to the United States to start a new life and to live here permanently?

WAILLY: Yeah. He came here to live permanently.

WBP: I see. And then he went back to France because he was unable to find work to keep him here permanently?

WAILLY: Well, he had work here, but I don't know. He must have got homesick and wanted to, you know, see the folks. Both sides had big families, you know. My dad and my mother both.

WBP: So, when he returned in 1913 to the United States he was pursuing really what he wanted to do. He wanted to come.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Do you remember whether . . . or do you happen to know whether or not there were other Frenchmen who came with your father? Or were there other French people in the mines in the area?

WAILLY: Yeah, there was a fella that did come with him, but I . . . I think his name was Turlleur we called it in French. T-u-r-l-e-u-r, I think.

WBP: Uh-huh!

WAILLY: I'm not sure. That was his . . .

WBP: He came with him.

WAILLY: . . . French name that he come with.

WBP: Would he . . . do you know whether when your father came here he found that there were French people in . . .

WAILLY: Oh, yeah.

WBP: . . . French miners?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: A lot of French miners. Were there also miners from other countries?

WAILLY: Here in the surrounding . . .

WBP: Yeah.

WAILLY: Oh, my, yes!

WBP: In Clinton or Mecca? Or Brazil?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: There were people from other countries as well?

WAILLY: Yeah, oh, yeah.

WBP: What were some of the . . .

WAILLY: Belgians and French and Germans and . . . oh, you know, all the . . . it seems like European countries.

WBP: Do you remember which country was best represented? Were most of the miners from one country or another?

WAILLY: Oh, I don't know. I don't know. It seems like that they were French, Italians, Germans and just, you know, from the surrounding countries there in Europe and just about all kinds.

(Unidentifiable voice in a whisper) Scotch.

WAILLY: What?

WBP: Scottish?

WAILLY: Yeah, Scots, yeah. Oh, she's Scotch here.

WBP: Ah-ha!

WAILLY: (laughs) Her dad was a mine boss here in this coal field.

WBP: Were there Irishmen? Irishmen in the mines?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Welsh?

WAILLY: Welsh, yeah. Yeah, a lot of Scotchmen, really. Dresser had a lot of Scotchmen that worked there and in surrounding mines around here. There are a lot of Scotchmen, really.

WBP: Would you say more Scotchmen than any . . .

WAILLY: Well, yeah. It seems like the Scotsmen were . . . most of them were mine bosses, you know.

WBP: I see.

Tape 1

WAILLY: Yeah, really.

WBP: They rose to management positions, positions of management?

WAILLY: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Well, I went to school to make miners, mine boss, fire boss You know what that is, don't you?

WBP: Fire boss?

WAILLY: Yeah. That's, you know, you're /an/ inspector. You know, you go in and test for the gases, you know.

WBP: I see. To make sure that there is not an explosive mixture in the mine.

WAILLY: Yeah. I done a lot of that . . . an awful lot of it. There at Dresser mine.

WBP: Let me ask you another question about the other groups of people. Were there ever any . . . were there blacks in the mines? Ever?

WAILLY: Few. Not very many though.

WBP: Were there Poles?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Were there Hungarians?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah. You know those people were good miners, really. They're good workers.

WBP: Were there Russians? Do you know whether or not there were Russians?

WAILLY: Well, there were very few Russians.

WBP: There may not have been, but there were some East Europeans?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: O.K. Well, that's

WBP: Would you say that the Frenchmen were . . . were there very many Frenchmen or were the Frenchmen rather in a minority?

WAILLY: Well, yeah, there were quite a few Frenchmens around here in Terre Haute and Shepherdsville, Clinton . . . you know, the surrounding towns.

WBP: Did you get to know them?

WAILLY: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

WBP: Did you get to know the other Frenchmen?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Were you particularly . . . did you go to social functions or picnics . . .

WAILLY: No. Not necessarily.

WBP: . . . with French people?

WAILLY: No, because most of them didn't . . . well, we went to church, see? The Protestant church and most of them were . . . they were Catholics, see. In fact, my dad was a Catholic when he married my mother.

WBP: How'd you happen to go to a Protestant church?

WAILLY: Well, I don't know, but my mother was a Protestant, see. And she (laughs) . . . she wasn't the boss, but then, nevertheless, we went to the Protestant church.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: In fact, my brother turned out to be a Methodist preacher.

WBP: Is that right?

WAILLY: In the Kentucky Conference.

WBP: Uh-huh. Well, that was an unusual marriage, I guess.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: It's unusual for a Catholic to marry a Protestant, maybe; it's unusual for a Catholic to become a Protestant (laughs), maybe.

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, it worked out all right. My dad . . . they got along. He didn't practice . . . he turned Protestant, my dad did.

WBP: Um hm. So, then you came over and your father then was a miner; and he worked After you came back the second time, where did you live? After you came back with him . . . to join him in 1915.

WAILLY: Nineteen /hundred/ fifteen, in Clinton.

WBP: You joined him in Clinton?

WAILLY: Yeah. Uh-huh.

WBP: And where was he working then? Do you remember?

WAILLY: He was working at Crown Hill 4. That's out of Clinton.

WBP: So that was the mine then that you would start working in

WAILLY: That's the mine I first started working, yeah.

WBP: Did you start working almost immediately after you came in 1915?

WAILLY: No, no. /It was/ 1916 when I

WBP: So, you were back in the United States a year before you began to work?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. Just about a year, yeah.

WBP: And you were 13 years old when you began?

WAILLY: Yeah. Uh huh.

WBP: Now, did you start because there was a job there and you said

WAILLY: No, no. The family . . . we had a big family you know. And I worked with my dad, see, when I first started.

WBP: So you went to work with him?

WAILLY: Yeah, I went to work with him, yeah.

WBP: Did he want you to learn the mining trade?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: He thought that would be a good thing for you to learn to do?

WAILLY: Yeah. I can remember one time when we were working together in the room, we were pulling pillars. Do you know what pillars . . . what I mean by pulling the pillar?

WBP: This is leaving of coal there . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, to hold up the roof.

WBP: . . . to hold up the roof, uh-huh.

WAILLY: Yeah. Anyhow, we were pulling pillars. We did a lot of . . . you know the roof kinda' weights down on the pillars and the coal pops out, you know. But anyhow, what happened there while we were . . . my dad and I were working right there in the same place, in the same room and the roof was working like everything. You know, crackin' and poppin', you know, and he said, "All right. Come on. Let's go out to the room there." You know, the entry. And we no more than got out there -- maybe about two minutes -- and the whole thing just fell in, you know.

WBP: Good heavens!

WAILLY: (laughs) After it fell in, why, we . . . not we, but then I went back in, you know. My dad didn't notice me going in where it caved in, and I was climbing on top of the fall, you know.

WBP: Yes?

WAILLY: A good amount of it caved in to the grass roots, see. (laughing) Well, not to the grass roots, but that's an expression.

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: And, boy, he seen me missing there, and he come in there, and he hollered at me; and there I was on top of that fall, you know. Oh, boy! He told me to come right down. Well, I could have caved in more you know.

WBP: You bet, yeah.

WAILLY: When I got down (laughs), he give me three kicks in the rear.

WBP: Did he? I bet he did! (laughing)

WAILLY: Yes, he did.

WBP: He was worried about you.

WAILLY: He sat me down and he told me why. He said you're gonna remember this. He told me, he said more of that stuff could come down and kill me, see?

WBP: Um hm.

WAILLY: And you know what? I never did forget that.

I know when I was workin' here at Dresser . . . well, I was fire boss in there, you know. You had to climb on top of these falls, you know, to test for gas. And every time I'd climb on a fall, I'd remember what my dad told me, you know, and what he done (laughs) to me. Every fall I'd . . . really, that'd come to me. Be careful! Be careful!

WBP: Yes.

Did he . . . do you remember other things that he taught you? Are there other things that you were able to use besides that?

WAILLY: Well, yeah. He told me also, you know, that to support the roof, you know, he'd always . . . he told me to always put five or six timbers together to hold the roof, you know. Not just one but five or six together, because it would hold a lot of weight, see. But when a squeeze comes on though, nothing will hold it. A hundred timbers won't hold it even.

WBP: Now what do you mean by "squeeze"?

WAILLY: Well, when the roof is gonna come down, you know, it'll squeeze first, you know. It'll even squeeze pillars, you know, where you leave . . . you know what I mean [by] "pillars," don't you?

WBP: Yes, yes.

So, you can see it begin to squeeze before it falls?

WAILLY: Sometimes it'll not fall. At No. 5 coal here I've seen the thing squeeze to [where] the bottom. and the top would meet without fallin' in.

WBP: Ah!

WAILLY: Yeah. Really, just all in one piece, you know.

WBP: My goodness!

WAILLY: It would squeeze all the timbers and even the coal, you know.

WBP: Well, now how long does that take . . . does it happen very quickly or . . .

WAILLY: No, no. That happens real slow. Maybe it'll take sometimes two or three days before it'll meet.

WBP: I see. But you can see that happening and you know. . .

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: . . . that you have to get out of there.

WAILLY: You'd better get out of there! Because when it meets, you know, yeah, that's too late! (laugh)
You'd just be in there and you know . . .

WBP: That's right. But as soon as you see it start to squeeze, the timbers start to pop loose and pop out?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. You'd better get out of there! Yeah, you bet.

WBP: Uh-huh.

WAILLY: But that lesson there, I got from my dad there. He give me three kicks in the rear (laughs) and, boy, listen! I never forgot that, never, really.

WBP: It was a good lesson, wasn't it?

WAILLY: Yes, it was. But I still get covered up (laughs) anyhow. (laughs) In 19 . . . (to himself in a very low voice) when was that? /To Mrs. Wailly in the next room./ Hey, when did I get hurt, Luella? Just as I went . . . 1952?

Mrs.
WAILLY: 'Four.

WAILLY: Nineteen /hundred/ fifty-four, yeah. January the 20th, 1954. That's when I got hurt.

WBP. What happened? /Did/ the roof cave in?

WAILLY: Yeah. Uh-huh.

WBP: Was it a shaft mine?

WAILLY: Well, no. It was a . . . they had strip coal there, you see. Then they had a slope mine. /It was/ Truax Coal Company, you know.

WBP: Slope mine, all right.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And where was that located?

WAILLY: South of Seelyville about maybe two miles, maybe a mile-and-a-half. South of Seelyville.

WBP: What were you doing at the time?

WAILLY: Well . . . you mean when I got hurt?

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: We were timbering cross-cuts and . . . well, we was gonna put up some crossbars, see. This slate started fallin' and a big piece of slate got me and . . . you know, threw me to the floor. And, well, it busted my back. I have . . .

WBP: Broke your back?

WAILLY: Yeah, broke my back, um hm.

WBP: Did they have trouble getting you out?

WAILLY: Oh, no. There was a bunch of men there, and they were eating their lunch, you know. They got me out right away.

WBP: Did you have feeling in your legs?

WAILLY: No. Not for quite a while . . . maybe . . . oh, I don't know. It was four or five hours before I began to have feeling in my legs again.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Numbness, see.

WBP: Did they just drag you out? Out of the . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, oh, yeah. They got me out right away.

WBP: Did you see other cave-ins during your career as a miner?

WAILLY: Oh, my gosh, yes! A lot of them. Oh, yes.

WBP: Did you see men killed?

WAILLY: Well, I didn't actually see them get killed. But, yeah . . . I've seen them fellas get killed in rock falls and electrocuted. Yeah, in all that time, I've seen a lot of accidents in the mine. Not actually see the accident, you know, but afterwards.

WBP: But you were there afterwards, and you knew about it? You always lived . . .

(coffee break)

WBP: When you were injured, I suppose it's something that could have happened anytime. Mining was a rather dangerous thing, was it not?

WAILLY: Well, not too much if you're careful, you know. You gotta be careful at all times. Naw, I don't think it's . . . a lot of people think it's dangerous, but I don't know. You can be careful.

WBP: Um hm. What about your father? Did he continue to mine the rest of his life?

WAILLY: Well, yeah. My father died early. He was 52 when he died.

WBP: Was he?

WAILLY: He had an ulcer that bursted on him.

WBP: Uh-huh. Was he mining up to the time that happened?

WAILLY: Yeah. Um hm.

WBP: In various mines or in one mine mainly? Did he stay at Crown Hill 4?

WAILLY: Yeah, he . . . well, no. He went to Crown Hill 2; I think that was the last mine he worked at. He . . .

WBP: Was he at Miami 9, too?

WAILLY: Yeah, yeah.

WBP: In other words, you and he worked together?

WAILLY: Yeah, we worked together.

WBP: At Crown Hill 4 in 1916 for six weeks and then
Miami 9 north of New Goshen from 1916 to 1920 and
then Crown Hill 2 from 1920 to 1922. You were
working in all those mines with your father?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: I see. And was Crown Hill 2 his last mine?

WAILLY: Yeah. Crown Hill 2 was his last mine, yeah.

WBP: Was that also near New Goshen -- or near Clinton?

WAILLY: Miami 9?

WBP: Crown Hill 2.

WAILLY: Crown Hill 2 was Klondike. D'ya ever hear of
Klondike?

WBP: I've heard of it.

WAILLY: Well, it's west of Clinton, Klondike is.

Well, we lived there in Klondike until 1922 when
we moved here in Terre Haute.

WBP: And then his ulcer burst. Was it in 19 . . .

WAILLY: In 1932 when that happened.

WBP: Did he mine . . . was he a miner until 1932?

WAILLY: Yeah. Um hm.

WBP: In Crown Hill 2? Do you know?

WAILLY: Yeah. Crown Hill 2, yeah.

WBP: Was Crown Hill 2 the last mine in which you two
. . . you worked with him?

WAILLY: No, no! The last mine I worked . . .

WBP: No. With him.

WAILLY: Oh! Yeah. Last mine.

WBP: Do you think the ulcer had any kind of . . .

WAILLY: Cancer?

WBP: No, no! Did it come from . . . was he worried or preoccupied about things?

WAILLY: I don't think so. I think it's a weakness there, because I had ulcers a long time ago.

WBP: It may have been hereditary, you mean?

WAILLY: I imagine. Yeah.

Oh, I don't know. I like to work in the coal mines. Really, I did. I loved it.

WBP: You said when you started with him at Crown Hill 4, you had to support your family. Did you go to work in the mine with him to help support the family?

WAILLY: Right. Yeah.

WBP: Do you remember what the wages were at that time?

WAILLY: Well, it was piece work. We got 64¢ a ton for loading coal, you know.

WBP: In 19 . . .

WAILLY: Nineteen /hundred/ sixteen, when I started.

WBP: Nineteen /hundred/ sixteen.

WAILLY: That's what . . .

WBP: You remember that?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Did he get the same amount of money?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: You both got . . .

WAILLY: Well, we worked together, see?

WBP: It was a matter of the more work you did, the more tons you mined and the more pay you'd get.

WAILLY: Sure, yeah.

WBP: Did the miners consider that a pretty fair wage . . . a pretty fair . . .

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, yes.

WBP: . . . wage.

WAILLY: But you see day work . . . I mean you were working by the day, /and/ wages were two ninety-eight /\$2.98/ a day for mule drivers and track layers and so on.

WBP: You mean the miners received piece work wages, but there were other miners that would receive wages?

WAILLY: Day wages, yeah.

WBP: So, if you were a miner and were able to get more than three or four tons, you might be able to do better than the wage earners? If you were a hard worker?

WAILLY: You mean if you was working piece work?

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: Good night, yes! You could make real good money, if you got a lot of cars, you know.

WBP: How much money could you . . . how much could

WBP: you earn more than the others? What would be the average . . .

WAILLY: Oh, maybe double their wages; maybe even triple sometimes, really. Honest! Yeah.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: If you were a good worker and you knew how to shoot your coal down, you know, and so on See, you had to prepare for the next day for you to load coal.

WBP: Would you shoot your own coal?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah, yeah.

WBP: Is that what you call it?

WAILLY: Well, you didn't shoot it yourself. You had a shot firer that did it. After quitting time, see, he'd come and light the fuses, you know.

WBP: Would he drill . . . would he drill?

WAILLY: Well, we drilled and tamped our own shots. But the shot firer would light the shots, you know.

WBP: How many hours a day did you work?

WAILLY: Eight hours. Seven to three.

WBP: So, by 1916 you had an 8-hour day?

WAILLY: Eight-hour day, yeah, yeah.

WBP: Was the mine union?

WAILLY: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah. (chuckles)

WBP: The way you smile, what are you . . .

WAILLY: Well, you know, we're still (laughing) having trouble (laughing) that way. The mines are . . . some of them won't cross the picket line, you know,

WAILLY: on account of the other fellows that are picketing the mines now.

WBP: What was your feeling about the union?

WAILLY: Why I think it's wonderful, the unions. Very helpful really. Yeah.

WBP: Did you join the union when you were . . . when you were . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, when I first went in, yeah.

WBP: . . . thirteen?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah.

WBP: You could join the union at 13?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: All you had to do was be a miner and pay union dues?

WAILLY: Yeah, yeah.

WBP: Would you have had any trouble . . .

WAILLY: I wasn't 13; I was 12 when I first started in the mine. Yeah. (chuckles)

WBP: Do you remember how many other people there were? How many other boys there were 12 years of age or 13 or . . .

WAILLY: In those years?

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: Yeah. There was quite a few.

WBP: Were there any people younger than you working in the mine?

WAILLY: Well, not younger. No.

WBP: You were about the youngest?

WAILLY: Well, yeah. That's about, you know . . . you had to lie about your age then, you know, 'cause you had to be 14 years old for that.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: There were a lot of them that were only 12 years old, yeah, or 13. Yeah.

WBP: Your dad then . . . did he help you get the job? Or were they hiring?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah, well, I worked with him, you see, when I first started. You were supposed to work with a miner for two years, see.

WBP: Oh, I see!

WAILLY: And then after you worked two years, you have to make license -- miner's license, you know.

WBP: I see. So it was an apprenticeship?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: An apprenticeship.

WAILLY: For two years. Yeah.

WBP: Well, that's an interesting way of training . . . that was a good way of training miners, wasn't it?

WAILLY: Yeah, oh, yeah.

WBP: Were the mines hiring fairly openly, or they were looking for labor or did they have enough labor to go around?

WAILLY: Well, at times you know it was hard to get work in the mines. At times, yeah.

WBP: So, it was good to have that experience and that . . .

WAILLY: Oh, you betcha, you betcha.

Yeah, I done a lot of different jobs in the coal mine. I didn't only load coal. I worked on transportation. You know, down below.

You know the Dresser coal mine here. It was, anyhow, five miles to the face /the coal seam being worked/ from the start . . . you know at the pit to your working place. Five miles anyhow.

WBP: Well now this is . . .

WAILLY: Down below, you had to travel.

WBP: Was this a slope mine?

WAILLY: No, oh, no. It was a . . .

WBP: Shaft. Straight down, shaft.

WAILLY: Straight down.

You know down here by the Wabash River.

WBP: Down by the Dresser power plant?

WAILLY: Yeah, right next to the plant. In fact, they had a big belt that coal would go right into the plant.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Yeah, they used all our coal.

WBP: But it would go straight down, and then you'd go five miles into the . . . underneath . . .

WAILLY: Underneath, yeah. We worked on this side of the river. We'd come under the river, you know, and . . .

WBP: Oh, you would! How deep down was it? Do you know?

WAILLY: Yeah. It was 275 feet deep there. I think now.

WBP: Was it a relatively safe mine?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: As mines go?

WAILLY: It was pretty safe, yeah. Although the water
(chuckles) broke in there three different times.

WBP: The water did?

WAILLY: The river. Yeah.

WBP: My goodness! What did you do?

WAILLY: Well, you didn't do anything. It was just . . .
it choked itself up. You know, with debris.

WBP: Yes?

WAILLY: Really!

WBP: You mean it would break in and then it would
stop by itself?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, they'd . . . after it stopped
itself, you know, why we'd have to bulkhead it, you
know, with steel and cement.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: 'Cause that river come in, boy . . . (laughs)

WBP: That must be frightening?

WAILLY: See, we worked it and . . . naw, you didn't
think anything of it.

WBP: You were working under the river?

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, you'd be working under here you'd
be under the river because, you know (laughs)
Most of the work was on this side of the river in the

WAILLY: last ten years, anyhow, at Dresser.

WBP: And did Dresser play it out?

WAILLY: Yeah, it played out. But here's one thing. They had about forty years' work on the other side of the fault that they had in the coal. And they thought maybe that Dresser would, you know, sink another place on the other side of the fault. Either that or they ought to have gone through because there's about 30 years' work, you know, on the other side of the fault.

WBP: I'm not sure . . . you mean there was . . . there had been 30 years' work on one side, and they thought there'd be another, maybe 30 years on the other?

WAILLY: No, I mean when they shut down, you know, there was about 30 more years of work. There was a big fault, you know, to go through.

WBP: Uh-huh.

WAILLY: It was sandstone, you know, real hard to go through.

WBP: I see. So, did you say, you had what? Thirty years of coal on one side of the fault?

WAILLY: On the other side of the fault, that's . . . yeah. Thirty more years of work!

WBP: Oh, you did?

WAILLY: Yeah. But they never did . . . they should have gone through the fault, is what they ought to have done.

WBP: They stopped at the fault rather than going on?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. Pretty expensive, you know.

WBP: It's as though it was too expensive to go through that . . . is it sandstone?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Sandstone wouldn't be too hard to go through, would it? It wouldn't be as hard as other stones?

WAILLY: Well, I don't really know whether it was sandstone or . . . it was a hard stone anyhow. It isn't like the equipment that they have nowadays. They ought to have gone through it, you know, and worked that coal out.

WBP: But somehow there was something about the economics of it perhaps that . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, probably. Yeah, yeah.

WBP: . . . prevented them from going in. They could get less expensive coal from a different mine or another part of the country?

WAILLY: Probably. But I don't know. They bought a lot of coal anyhow, the plant did. The mine didn't put out enough coal for the plant.

WBP: Uh-huh. Where did they buy it?

WAILLY: Well, I don't know. I imagine on the open market. I really don't know about that.

WBP: Was it non-union coal?

WAILLY: No, I don't think so. (chuckles)

WBP: Was it a better quality coal?

WAILLY: No. That was good coal that they had there at Dresser. The plant run on it for quite a number of years, you know.

WBP: Was it low-sulphur coal?

WAILLY: No, it wasn't low sulphur. No.

WBP: Was it high BTU coal?

WAILLY: Yeah, it was a high BTUs.

WBP: It was high sulphur though?

WAILLY: Yeah, it was high sulphur. But they were equipped there at the plant to use it all.

WBP: They were not?

WAILLY: Yeah, they were equipped to use it all. They.
. .

WBP: They could have used any kind?

WAILLY: Well, yeah. Yeah, when . . . I'll tell you what though. When we'd go on strike, they could turn to oil, that plant did.

WBP: Oh, is that right?

WAILLY: Yeah, (laughs) they did.

WBP: Huh!

WAILLY: Boy, they'd burn a lot of oil though! They'd haul it in in trucks. Oh, man!

WBP: Did you have some long strikes that you remember?

WAILLY: At Dresser?

WBP: At Dresser.

WAILLY: Not too long, but then Oh, I think they were all too long (laughing) for that matter. But .
. .

WBP: Did you have frequent strikes?

WAILLY: Not too much up there, because we had . . . really we had good conditions there at Dresser, really.

WBP: What about in the other mines? Did the Grant mine, or Bickets, Crown Hill 2 . . . do you remember strikes at those mines?

WAILLY: Well, not too much. No. You want to remember the mines worked good you know during World War I and World War II. In fact the government took over the

WAILLY: mines in 194 . . .

WBP: 'Forty-six?

WAILLY: 'Forty-five or somewhere along in there.

WBP: 'Forty-six. [1943]

WAILLY: 'Forty-six, was it? (laughs) So our checks, you know, Secretary [Harold] Ickes' name was on our checks. (laughs)

WBP: Is that right?

WAILLY: Interior Secretary, you know.

WBP: Uh-huh.

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, Uncle Sam took 'em over, and (laughs) we couldn't argue with him, could we?

WBP: That's right. No, you couldn't.

WAILLY: Oh, ho! You betcha. Well, that was all right. (laughs) Darned right. Just like going through a striking for nothing, you know. That's out. That's no good. (laughs)

WBP: Tell me about the different jobs you did. You loaded coal. That's what the average miner did -- he loaded coal?

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, you loaded coal. You gotta shoot your coal down, you know.

WBP: A man would come . . . you would drill, and you'd put the charge in . . .

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: . . . and then after you'd leave the coal at night, there'd be a man [who] would go in and what was he called?

WAILLY: Shot firer.

WBP: The shot firer? And he would put a fuse on that and light it?

WAILLY: Naw, no, no. The fellow that . . . the loader the fellow that was . . . the miner there, he'd drill his holes and put the charge of powder in, you know.

WBP: You would do that, in other words?

WAILLY: Yeah, yeah.

WBP: And what would the shot firer do?

WAILLY: Well, he'd just light the fuse you know and get out of there.

 In later years, starting in 1946 we weren't allowed to use fuses in the mine any more. We had to use electric caps, you know?

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: And that was all right.

WBP: And wire it? And then use a plunger?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. In fact that's what I did. I was shot firer there at Dresser for . . . oh, I don't know, for about five or six years.

WBP: Using the electrical system?

WAILLY: Yes. Uh-huh. Yeah.

WBP: Was that better than the other method?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Shot firer, it was a lot easier for him. Yeah. 'Cause you see you'd wire a whole room all together, see, because you had caps that would go off in one second, two seconds, three seconds, four seconds, and five seconds. In other words, you could put five shots there, and they didn't all go off at once.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: If you wanted to put these Or you could put them all with one second cap you know, and let it all fall at one time.

WBP: What was the difference? Why would you use one method over the other?

WAILLY: Well, say you want to . . . say you want to break the center down in your coal. That made it nice that way, really. You break the center down you know, and the rest of it would come down easier.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: One time though when I was shooting there, I had some bottom. That's real hard clay, you know?

WBP: Um hm.

WAILLY: Anyhow the fellow that got it ready was the driller, you know. He'd drill the holes in the bottom, then put dynamite in it. And this time here (I just about got fired for this) I wired all 73 shots together -- all 73 of them. Well, each one of them had two sticks of dynamite. (laughs) Oh, boy, I tell you. The boss and I were pretty good friends, but then (laughs) . . . he said "I ought to fire you" but he didn't.

WBP: (laughing) Because . . .

WAILLY: Jack Gibbs.

WBP: . . . you wired them all together?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: . . . to go at the same . . .

WAILLY: Blow up all at once.

WBP: All at once.

WAILLY: Yeah. Oh, you know, there was just such a concussion that . . . oh, boy! It like to never stop.

WBP: It just kept shaking?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Man! Topped an earthquake! (laughs)

WBP: Was there danger that the mine would cave in any time?

WAILLY: Why, sure, yeah.

WBP: Why did you happen to do that?

WAILLY: Well, that was pure orneriness, I'll tell you.

WBP: Was it? (laughs)

WAILLY: Yeah. And he should have fired me.

WBP: You were just doing it for . . . kinda for . . . to see what would happen?

WAILLY: Well, you see it blowed out doors and brattices you know that circulate your air, see?

WBP: Was this at the Dresser mine?

WAILLY: Yeah. Uh-huh. At the Dresser mine.

WBP: Well, you . . . just orneriness then, huh?

WAILLY: Yep. Boy, I'll tell you . . .

WBP: Were you unhappy with somebody at the mine?

WAILLY: Hm um. No, I just done it for orneriness, you know. (laughs) Oh, boy!

WBP: Kinda to see what would happen?

WAILLY: Yeah. It happened, too. Gosh!

END OF SIDE 1

TAPE 1-SIDE 2

WBP: I bet you haven't told . . .

WAILLY: But he didn't. We talked it over. I apologized.
(laughs) Told him I'd never do it again.

WBP: Was the electrical detonating system better
than the fuse?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah, yeah. You see you had a thing that
made electricity with, you know. You've seen them.

WBP: Would you turn the crank or would you push it
in?

WAILLY: Well, they had some that you pushed a lever or
these little ones, you know.

WBP: I see. Where you just turn the knob?

WAILLY: But you can only shoot about five shots with
them little things, you know.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: What I done . . . when I got all these wired
together (laughs), I put it on a trolley wire. I
just done that, see, with the wire. (laughs) The
whole thing went . . . oh, boy!

WBP: Were you outside? You must have been outside.

WAILLY: Well, I was in the clear of the shots. I was
there for the concussion though!

WBP: Yeah.

(both laugh heartily)

WAILLY: Boy, I tell you. Well, I'll never do that.
Oh, do that! I said shame, shame on me, really.

WBP: Yeah. But when you were shot firer, were you
also loading coal? Or by that time you were . . .

WAILLY: No, no. I was shot firer. I'd tamp up shots.
The fire boss in the place was like . . . when the
cutter, the cutting machine, would go in place, you
know, why it had to be tested before anybody could

WAILLY: go in.

WBP: The air would have to be tested in the mine.

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah, you know. I had to test for new gases. You know your black damp, your methane gas, and . . .

WBP: What's "black damp"?

WAILLY: Well, it's carbon dioxide.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: I've seen places there at the bottom of the mine where, aw, maybe this much [indicating with his hands] from the roof, you had air . . . that much.

WBP: Is that right?

WAILLY: The rest of it was black damp.

WBP: Carbon dioxide?

WAILLY: Yeah. Could kill you, you know. Put you to sleep. Yeah.

WBP: Could you smell it?

WAILLY: No, no.

WBP: You didn't know it was there until you tested it?

WAILLY: Well . . . yeah, in those days we had carbide lamps, you know. And if you'd go way down from the air, you know . . . because it's heavier than your regular air you know, your black damp they call it. Anyhow, your carbide lamp will go out. It just won't burn. Even an oil lamp will go out.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: But when I first started in the mine, why a lot of people were still using oil lamps, you know, in those years.

WBP: What did you use to test the mine with when you were fire boss? I mean . . .

WAILLY: We had a little lamp, you know, that you use.
/It was/ especially built for that.

WBP: I see. They did not use a canary?

WAILLY: Naw, no. No. (chuckles) No, these lamps . . . they're accurate, you know. No.

WBP: This was in the 1940s and '50s.

WAILLY: Well, we used the lamps, oh, long years ago. They were invented by the Scotchmen in Scotland.

WBP: I see. So throughout your career they would use a lamp to test the mine?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And do you remember when they switched from oil to carbide in lamps?

WAILLY: Well, a lot of them were still using oil lamps in 1916 when I first started.

WBP: Oh, they were?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Was carbide an improvement over the oil lamps?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. You'd have a better light.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Yeah. Then in 1945, I think it was, they let us use electric lamps.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: You know, have the lamp on your head and then carry a battery on your belt. Well, they were all right; but then . . . if it was too dangerous to go in with a carbide lamp, why it was too dangerous for

WAILLY: anybody to go in. Especially if you smoked cigarettes, you know.

WBP: At least the carbide lamp, I mean, would go out. Where if you had an electric lamp, that wouldn't be sensitive to the gases, would it? But you were always . . . the gas boss would always make sure that it was all right to go in anyway.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: They had to do that, sure.

WAILLY: Yeah, I did that for a number of years.

WBP: Were you gas boss before you were . . .

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. I had papers for mine boss and fire boss, too, see. That's two separate papers.

WBP: I see. Fire boss, and then you were also a shot firer.

WAILLY: Shot firer, yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah.

WBP: Could you hold two jobs at once? Or if you were shot firer, could you be . . .

WAILLY: Well, shot firer was . . . during the day, you know, you did other things. You worked on the cutting machine or . . .

WBP: So, you would . . . if you had a shot fire, that was additional work you'd have.

WAILLY: Well, it wasn't additional. Us shot firers, we'd come in maybe two hours later than the rest of the miners would come in.

WBP: I see. You'd work the same number of hours.

WAILLY: Yeah. See, we'd shoot the shots. In fact, they'd try to get fellows for shot firers to be fire bosses, too, see. So after we got . . . or run

WAILLY: shots, you know . . . our shots done, why we'd let the smoke clear out and then we'd go inspect with our lamp to see if there was methane gas, you know.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Then your . . . well, like your carbon dioxide, your black damps we called it in the mine. Your lamp would go out on that.

WBP: So, your fire boss work would go hand-in-hand with shot firing?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Because you'd be blowing some more . . . making some more . . . cracks in the strata of the coal and rock, and therefore there might be gas pockets coming in.

WAILLY: Right!

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Because you see there was another shift coming in, see. The afternoon shift. Why everything had to be cleared for them to come in, you know.

WBP: Sure.

WAILLY: Nobody's allowed in the mine until the mine's been inspected, you know, for all your gases and so on.

WBP: O.K.

In the mines that you worked in, from Crown Hill 4, 1916; Miami 9, 1916 to 1920; Crown Hill 2, 1920 to '22; and Bickets 1 in 1922; Grant mine, 1922-23; were you a loader in all those mines?

WAILLY: Yeah. Um hm.

WBP: You loaded cars.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And that meant that you shoveled . . . worked with a pick and shovel?

WAILLY: Pick and shovel and drill, you know you had to drill. Holes for you . . .

WBP: For the shot.

And did you work for piece work wages in all those?

WAILLY: Piece work, yeah. Right.

WBP: All right. And did you . . . by the time you left mining, you . . . I know there was a time that you were at Columbian Enameling & Stamping Co., Inc., but you went back to mining. Did the miners still get piece work or would you get straight wages?

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, there at Dresser, when I started there, that was day wages. In fact, I don't think they have any more piece work.

WBP: During the period that you were working piece work, did the piece work rates improve? Did they increase or did they stay the same?

WAILLY: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah. I think I told you, day work then when I first started was two ninety-eight \$2.98 a day.

WBP: Day work.

WAILLY: Less than three dollars, see.

WBP: And you could earn as much as what? Nine, twelve, fifteen dollars?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah, piece work, sure you could.

WBP: How much would you and your dad earn for piece work in a day?

WAILLY: I made the same as he did.

WBP: You did? You both earned the same amount of money?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And that was about what?

WAILLY: Well, if you got the cars, you know, to throw the coal in, why, the more coal you loaded, the more money you made.

WBP: So, the cars were a factor. I mean if you . . . sometimes you wouldn't get the cars?

WAILLY: That's right. When I first started, you know, it seemed like that that's the reason the boys went in the mines, so that the old man could get more cars, you know. Because when I started, I got a half a turn /each time the motorman returned with empty cars was a "turn"/, see. So that made it . . . say he'd get four cars, well, he'd get two cars on my number, see?

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: You understand what I mean, don't you?

WBP: Uh-huh. I mean . . . so you'd get two . . . every miner was allocated a certain number of cars?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Depending on how much work he did? Or who decided how many cars he would get?

WAILLY: Well, well, the unions decided that. But you see . . .

WBP: How many tons would a car hold?

WAILLY: Well, around 15 hundred -- that'd be two ton and a half. /See explanation below/ Some of them

WAILLY: were bigger and some of them were even smaller. Some were even ton cars.

WBP: Fifteen hundred, is that what you said?

WAILLY: Fifteen hundred pounds. You know, less than a ton.

WBP: That'd be what? Three-quarters of a ton, right?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And you and your father would do six cars in one day?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah, we loaded more than that. But you see, you were just allocated so many a day, you know.

WBP: By the union?

WAILLY: Well, yeah, the union took care of that. They seen that there wasn't any cheating. You know, a fellow might get one more car than the other guy and there'd be trouble over it you know.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Yeah. But you see, you go . . . used to they didn't cut the coal underneath, you know. When I first started, it was right on solid, you know. You had to be careful the way you shot your coal. (laughs) You couldn't just bore a hole right straight in the coal and fill it full of powder. You had to watch. You had to put it on an angle, see, to shoot the coal out.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Because if you'd bore a hole right straight into a place, well, it'd just make a big hole there and maybe this big around, and that's no good.

WBP: I see. That wouldn't get the effective . . . that wouldn't bring as much down as you would by undercutting it.

WAILLY: Right.

WBP: Now, later on, did they use the undercutting technique? Did that start later?

WAILLY: Well, they had a few. But when I first started . . . well, we worked on the solid for quite a number of years -- my dad and I.

WBP: And then your dad became ill and then went out of the mine. But then you stayed.

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: And you would . . . I remember you said at one point you also worked cars?

WAILLY: Yeah, I worked on transportation pulling the cars from inside, you know, to . . . Well, it's run like a railroad up here, you know. You got to gather all the cars up and bring them where they hashed it up, see. And like Dresser, you know, where they had a 5-mile haul down below.

WBP: Would you . . . were those electric? Electric cars?

WAILLY: Yeah. Everything was electric, yeah.

WBP: When you first started, was it electric?

WAILLY: Yeah, they had electric motors that pulled the cars.

WBP: There were never mules down in mines . . .

WAILLY: Oh, yes, there were!

WBP: Oh, there were?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Do you remember the mules?

WAILLY: Sure! I even drove mules.

WBP: Did you?

WAILLY: One time, yeah. In 1932, I think it was. I worked north of Seelyville, driving mule.

WBP: This was during the time that you owned the mine?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Going back to the number of cars. This mine . . . the union would see to it that everybody got a fair number of cars.

WAILLY: Yeah. Sure.

WBP: If you had had say . . . was the limitation on what you could make the number of cars you had or the amount of work you could do in a day? In other words, if you'd had more cars, could you have earned more money?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Because it wasn't beyond your capability to load more cars?

WAILLY: That's right.

WBP: You just didn't have more cars?

WAILLY: That's right.

WBP: They just didn't need you to produce . . .

WAILLY: Well, sometimes you got all the cars you wanted, you know. Say there was people that didn't come to work, you know, in your part of the mine. And then you'd get just about all the cars you'd want.

WBP: How many would you want?

WAILLY: Between . . . a lot of layoffs you know.

WBP: How many could you do if you could do all you wanted?

WAILLY: Oh, I don't know. One time when I was a kid, my dad wasn't there and I loaded twenty-two ton of coal.

WBP: You did?! (laughs)

WAILLY: Yeah, really. In ten cars.

WBP: My goodness!

WAILLY: Yeah. Miami 9.

WBP: Huh! Is that the most you can remember loading?

WAILLY: Well, when I was a kid, yeah. See, I was 13 years old when I loaded that much coal.

WBP: (laughs heartily)

WAILLY: Yeah, really.

WBP: Oh, wow!

WAILLY: Well, man, you gotta prepare for the next day, too. You gotta drill maybe a couple shots anyhow, you know, for you to have coal for the next day.

WBP: Did you tell me how the piece work rates changed? Did they increase from 64 cents a ton?

WAILLY: Well, it's been a long time since we had piece work in the mine.

WBP: I know. But during the time that you were working piece work, did they stay about the same or did they increase? Do you remember that?

WAILLY: Oh, yes, it increased! Good night, yes. You see during World War I we got a dollar eight (\$1.08) a ton. See, they went up from 64 cents to a dollar eight.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: You had to buy all your powder, you know, to
shoot your coal down and your tools and . . .

WBP: You had to buy those things?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah.

WBP: Where did you buy them?

WAILLY: From the company.

WBP: And this would be true at all these mines that
you worked at?

WAILLY: Yeah. See, they'd deliver your powder and so
on.

WBP: They would? To your house?

WAILLY: Oh, no! Down below, I mean.

WBP: But you had to buy it out of your own wages?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: And did you buy your shovel and your pick?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And your lamp?

WAILLY. Everything. Yeah.

WBP: Did you buy . . . where did you live during
the time that you were working with your father?
Did you live at the same location or did you change
residences?

WAILLY: No, we lived in Clinton.

WBP: You lived in Clinton during . . . from 1916
through 19 . . .

WAILLY: To 1922.

WBP: Nineteen /hundred/ twenty-two?

WAILLY: Yeah. Then we moved into Terre Haute.

WBP: O.K. But you lived in the same place at Clinton?
The same residence?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Do you remember what address it was?

WAILLY: No. It was a rural route -- Rural Route 3.

WBP: Rural Route 3. Were there other miners . . .
were there other miners living in the neighborhood?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. They were all miners in the neighbor-
hood.

WBP: Who owned the . . . did you own the house?

WAILLY: Yeah. My folks did, yeah.

WBP: Your folks did?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And rural route . . . what route was it?

WAILLY: Rural Route 3.

WBP: Rural Route 3.

WAILLY: Box 74. (laughs)

WBP: Box 74. O.K.

WAILLY: That was 'way back in the teens though.

WBP: Uh-huh. Through 1922 or so?

WAILLY: Yeah. /In/ nineteen /hundred/ twenty two we
moved here, to Terre Haute.

WBP: And then when you moved to Terre Haute, you went to work at Columbian Enameling in '23?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Nineteen /hundred/ twenty-three . . .

WAILLY: Nineteen /hundred/ twenty-three.

WBP: To 1931?

WAILLY: I quit the mine. (laughs) I thought I was going to quit, but I got homesick for the mine, I guess.

WBP: Yeah.

Now, earlier you said that you lived . . . you moved to Terre Haute in 1921. Do you remember . . .

WAILLY: We moved to Terre Haute in 1922.

WBP: 'Twenty-two?

WAILLY: Did I say '21?

WBP: Yeah. At first. When I first asked you.

When you moved to Terre Haute, were you still working in a mine? Did you work in the Grant mine?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And were you living in Terre Haute then?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: When you worked at Bickets, were you living in Terre Haute?

WAILLY: In Terre Haute.

WBP: O.K. What about Crown Hill 2?

WAILLY: Well, I was working there when we moved. I was working at Crown Hill 2.

WBP: When you moved . . . when you moved? Well, maybe it was 1921?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: You may have moved here in 1921 then.

WAILLY: You're right. We moved here in 1921, yeah. I still worked at Crown Hill 2. I rode the inter-urban, streetcar you know, to Clinton. Then I'd get on the miners' train there on 9th Street.

WBP: On 9th Street in Clinton?

WAILLY: Yeah. And go to the mine from there.

WBP: I see.

Let's go back to when you lived at Clinton. Did you . . . was there a company store that you . . . where you could buy groceries?

WAILLY: No. Huh-uh.

WBP: All right.

And the house that you lived in, your father owned, so it wasn't a company house.

WAILLY: No. Huh-uh.

WBP: Was it a company real estate development?

WAILLY: No.

WBP: O.K.

WAILLY: No. We . . .

WBP: This was all private?

WAILLY: We owned five acres there.

WBP: O.K. Did you farm a little bit, too?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. (chuckles)

WBP: Have some cows and chickens?

WAILLY: Yeah. Had cows and chickens and a couple of horses.

WBP: What did you do for recreation when you lived there in those days? Did you go to a movie or . . .

WAILLY: Rode a horse.

WBP: Rode a horse?

WAILLY: Horseback. Without a saddle. (chuckles)

WBP: Ah ha. Bareback.

Did you have some things you could do? Were there some taverns in Clinton that you could go . . .

WAILLY: Nooo. I didn't go there. I was too young anyhow to . . .

WBP: What would your father do at night? Did he go . . . did he play cards ever?

WAILLY: Nooo. Well, we went to church.

WBP: Uh-huh. You're church-goers, huh?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: O.K.

So, why did you move to Terre Haute? Do you remember that?

WAILLY: Well, I really don't know why we moved to Terre Haute, to tell you the truth of it. I don't know why.

WBP: Do you know where . . .

WAILLY: 'Cause I was working in Clinton, see.

WBP: Yeah.

WAILLY: (chuckles)

WBP: Do you remember what Terre Haute was like when you moved here?

WAILLY: Well, yeah. I used to come here at my aunt's on Saturday and go to the Hippodrome theater, you know.

WBP: You did?

WAILLY: Yeah. Then I'd go home.

WBP: During the day . . . in the afternoon . . . you'd go in the after . . .

WAILLY: No, in the evening.

WBP: In the evening?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: What would be playing at the Hippodrome?

WAILLY: Well, they had a lot of plays there. On stage you know.

WBP: They'd have stage plays?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Would they have variety shows?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Did you ever go to any other theaters there?

WAILLY: Nope. I never went to the Grand Opera. I never did go there.

WBP: What other . . . did you like coming to Terre Haute?

WAILLY: Yeah. My mother's sister lived here, see.
And I'd stay overnight at her house and go back
Sunday morning.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Of course, I'd go to church here on Sunday
morning -- the Methodist church over here on 16th
Street. Then I'd go home.

WBP: That's when you were still living in Clinton?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And so then when you moved here, was it your
idea to move here or your dad's idea?

WAILLY: No. It was my folks' idea to move here.
(chuckles)

WBP: Would it have something to do with his health
maybe? So he could be closer to medical . . .

WAILLY: I don't know.

WBP: . . . treatment?

WAILLY: I don't think so.

WBP: When they moved here, did they move . . . where
did they move? What address?

WAILLY: Twenty-nine thirty-nine North 17th. In High-
land.

WBP: They lived there all their lives then?

WAILLY: Who lived all their lives?

WBP: Your parents.

WAILLY: In Terre Haute?

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: From that point on.

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah, my dad . . . I told you my dad
died in 1932?

WBP: Um hm. I think so.

WAILLY: And my mother died about 24 (1957) years ago.

WBP: He died a relatively young man. He was 52,
you say?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah, that's . . .

WBP: O.K.

Then do you remember anything else about Terre Haute in 1921 when you moved here? You remembered the interurbans, and you would ride to work on the interurbans. Where would you get on the interurbans?

WAILLY: At Stop 5.

WBP: Stop 5. On what street?

WAILLY: Let's see. I lived on Elizabeth, and this was . . . I think it was Lee Avenue, I think. It was there where the interurban made a turn off of Lafayette, you know. And it would travel on the east side of Lafayette. You remember it, do you?

WBP: No. But it would travel on Lafayette. There was also interurban . . . was there an interurban on 13th Street?

WAILLY: No. That was city cars.

WBP: Streetcar?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: O.K. So this was an interurban on Lafayette?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And you would take the interurban . . . you would get on interurban at Stop 5?

WAILLY: Stop 5 and go to Clinton, yes.

WBP: Go all the way to Clinton?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Would it stop a number of times . . .

WAILLY: Oh, yeah.

WBP: . . . in Terre Haute?

WAILLY: Yeah, there was other miners that would get on.

WBP: This was a miner train, right? And this was beginning in about what year? After you moved here in '21, '22?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: And you'd go up there then to Crown Hill 2?

WAILLY: Yeah. See, I'd get on the train there -- on 9th Street -- and then we'd go on to the mine from there. And the interurban would get at Stop 5 at 5 o'clock in the morning when that stampin' mill whistle would blow, you know?

WBP: Uh-huh.

WAILLY: And one time I missed it (chuckles) by about five seconds.

WBP: Oh, no!

WAILLY: Yeah. Only one time did I ever get late for work.

WBP: Huh. That's quite a . . .

WAILLY: Boy! At 5 o'clock he was right there. (chuckles)

WBP: He was on time every day.

WAILLY: Yep. He was on time every day.

WBP: And then he would take you to Clinton, and then you'd change to a train at Clinton.

WAILLY: Yeah, miners' train.

WBP: Miners' train. And how many trains were there a day?

WAILLY: Five.

WBP: Five trains?

WAILLY: Five trains.

WBP: From Clinton?

WAILLY: Yeah. Five miners' trains.

WBP: Now, that's two . . . that would be both ways? Five going and . . .

WAILLY: Oh, no. No. That was five trains that would go to the mines though. All of the different mines you know.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: See, there was a lot of mines working at that time.

WBP: In different directions around Clinton?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. This one here went . . . the one I went on, it went to the Crown Hill mine. Then later when I worked at Miami 9, the miners' train would leave 9th Street there at the same place, but he'd go south. There was three other trains that'd go south.

WBP: Um hmp.

WAILLY: There's a lot of mines there. Just an awful lot.
You know, during World War I and . . .

WBP: World War I was particularly active for mining.
There was a lot of mine work? Lot of work for the
miners?

WAILLY: Lot of mining, yeah.

WBP: Did you have a sense that maybe after the war
there was a falling off of mine production? In
mine work?

WAILLY: Well, yeah, but it didn't stop all at once,
you know. Yeah, it slowed down.

WBP: How did you happen to go to work for Columbian
Enameling in 1923?

WAILLY: Well, I don't know. I got hurt, you know, and
. . .

WBP: No. I didn't know.

WAILLY: Yeah, I got hurt November 15th -- I think I
told you that, didn't I? In 1920.

WBP: No. You didn't tell me that.

WAILLY: November the 15th, 1920, I . . . oh, I didn't
tell you I got hurt?

WBP: No. That was at Crown Hill 2.

WAILLY: Yeah, Crown Hill 2.

WBP: What were you doing? What happened there?

WAILLY: Well, I was on haulage and was backing up. We
had three cars on. The motorman was pulling it out
of a switch, you know, and was going to back up and

WAILLY: get the rest of our cars and then go on out the bottom with them, see?

Well, the fellas loading the car, they're supposed to leave the hand-holds on for you to hold on, see. And there was no hand-holds there, and I fell under the car.

WBP: Oh, good heavens!

WAILLY: Yeah. Boy, I . . . oh, man!

WBP: What happened to you? In what way . . . how were you injured?

WAILLY: Well, it broke my back. It fractured . . . well, my pelvis was mashed in and my back, too, in the lower part. It was . . . my spine, you know.

WBP: You broke your back twice then?

WAILLY: Yeah. Twice. The other time, over here.

WBP: Oh-ho, good heavens!

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: So, you were out of work beginning in 1920 then . . .

WAILLY: That happened November 15, 1920, when I fell under that car, yeah.

WBP: Good heavens! And where did you go . . . did they take you to the hospital? Where did . . .

WAILLY: They took me to St. Anthony's Hospital.

WBP: St. Anthony's? How long were you there?

WAILLY: Oh, I wasn't there too long. I think . . . two months, I think.

WBP: And you recovered all right then?

WAILLY: Yeah. Not all right. I never did get all right.

WBP: Never were all right?

WAILLY: No.

WBP: Did the mine . . .

WAILLY: Then this last time that I got hurt, you know?

WBP: Uh-huh.

WAILLY: That finished me up. I never did go back to work.

WBP: The first time, who took care of the bills?

WAILLY: Well, the compensation law come in in 1919. They had to take care of the bill.

WBP: So, the coal mining company had to take care of the bills?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: It sounds like it might have been awfully painful?

WAILLY: Oh, man! Oh, gee! Whew! And in the ambulance, we stopped I think every five miles. They weren't equipped like they are now, you know. And it was . . . it wasn't a hard road from here to Clinton, you know.

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: Gravel and . . .

WBP: Up and down, bouncing.

WAILLY: Oh, boy!

WBP: Ambulance ride in itself must have been torture.

WAILLY: Boy, oh, boy! It was terrible. Honest!

WBP. Well, it seems like you must have had . . .
you had pretty bad injuries then, if it broke your
back and crushed your pelvis.

WAILLY: Yeah. I did. But I went back to work though.
I wasn't off . . .

WBP: Were you loading coal when you went back to
work?

WAILLY: When I went back to work?

WBP: Yes. Were you able to load coal again?

WAILLY: Yeah, yeah.

WBP: And you went back to work . . .

WAILLY: But I had an awful time though, I'll tell you.

WBP: I see. And it was so difficult that that made
you decide that you might want to go to work at
Columbian Enameling?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. Quittin' the mines. (chuckles)
But I went back though. I got a job at Dresser,
see, and . . . (laughs)

WBP: Yeah. Were you sorry to quit the mines when
you went to Columbian Enameling? Were you sorry to
have to do that?

WAILLY: Naw, I wasn't. Huh-uh. Really. (laughs)
Nope. But I got homesick for the mine again in 1941.
(aside) What date was that I started at Dresser?

WBP. Was it after Pearl Harbor or before?

WAILLY: Oh, no, it was before Pearl Harbor.

THIRD PARTY: I don't know.

WAILLY: This was . . . yeah, I know. It was the first
part of May when I started at Dresser.

WBP: What did you think about that made you want to
 go back to mining?

WAILLY: I don't know. (laughs)

Mrs. WAILLY: He didn't think! (laughs)

WBP: (laughs)

WAILLY: Well, I didn't think . . . No, that's right.

WBP: But you said earlier in the interview that you
 enjoyed mining.

WAILLY: I did, yeah.

WBP: What'd you like about it? What made you . . .

WAILLY: Well, I just . . .

WBP: What did you think about it?

WAILLY: I don't know. Well, you made good money in
 those days, you know. I don't know. I just loved
 to work in the mine, really.

WBP: Did you like the fellowship working with the
 other miners?

WAILLY: Well, now you weren't in close contact with
 other people. Maybe you worked, maybe, a hundred
 feet away from your next door buddy, you know.

WBP: So, it was kind of lonely work then? It wasn't
 . . .

WAILLY: Well, yeah, if you want to put it that way.
 But it's . . . well, I don't know. I like the kind
 of work because you make good money, you know, if
 you get the cars.

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: Yeah. No, really, I loved it. (chuckles)
 That's nuts, isn't it?

WBP: Well, it was . . . now it would be . . . you were always breathing kind of a coal dust, weren't you?

WAILLY: Yeah, plenty of that.

WBP: Did that have any permanent effect on your health?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: How do you mean?

WAILLY: (simultaneously) Your lungs, you mean?

WBP: Yeah.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: How do you mean?

WAILLY: Well, I mean the coal dust. I get black lung, you know.

WBP: Do you?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: You get black lung payments -- disability payments?

WAILLY: Yeah, yeah. Uh-huh. See, they . . . oh, they give you all kinds of tests, you know. And, yeah, I got black lung. That's the reason down below, you know, you get out of wind easy. I worked on a cutting machine a lot. Well, out here at Dresser, I worked on a cutting machine there for . . . well, a little over ten years. And the dust is so bad that if you put your hand way out, you can't even see it!

WBP: My goodness!

WAILLY: That's how bad it is, the dust.

WBP: My goodness.

WAILLY: You eat a lot of dirt now, I mean.

WBP: You breath dirt.

WAILLY: Yeah, why sure, yeah. I tell you I tried, you know, all kinds of respirators, you know. You can't get enough wind through them, you know, because when you're working hard . . .

WBP: You've got to have more air.

WAILLY: Yeah, you do. These respirators that they have -- all kinds of them -- just didn't do any good, that's all!

WBP: But you liked this work?

WAILLY: Yeah. Oh, I loved it, really.

WBP: Did you like it when you were on the machinery or did you like it when you were on pick and shovel?

WAILLY: Naw, I liked it on the machine.

WBP: You liked it on the machinery?

WAILLY: I made bigger money on the machines, you know. Yeah. That's about the highest paid there is -- on a cutting machine, you know.

WBP. I see. It's a specialized . . .

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: . . . kind of work.

WAILLY: Hey, you know what? I noticed on television. They don't have them conditions now. They spray water in all the . . . you know, for these cutting machines and put the dust down, now.

WBP: Yeah?

WAILLY: Boy, I'm telling you, I've eat a lot of dirt. Whew! Man!

WBP: Did you . . . were you always in a shaft mine?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Either sloping or . . .

WAILLY: Well, I . . . no. Later on, back in the '30s I hauled coal out of strip pits. You know what I mean, don't you?

WBP: Yes. But when you were a miner though, you were working . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, I was down below.

WBP: . . . down below. They don't have any more shaft mines now, do they? Are there any . . .

WAILLY: I don't think Indiana's got a one any more. Might be one little one but . . .

WBP: Was the Dresser mine one of the last shaft mines?

WAILLY: I . . . no, I don't think so. No, I know. No, there's a mine here in town that . . . right here out of town. I can't think of the name. Down there, southeast part of town . . .

WBP: Mount Pleasant was the last shaft mine.

WAILLY: Mount Pleasant, yeah, yeah.

WBP: You were talking . . . I may have interrupted you when you were talking about the conditions down there with dust and so forth.

WAILLY: Yeah?

WBP: You said they don't have that any more because they have water that they use.

WAILLY: Yes. They spray water on the . . . yeah. Yeah, that's a condition they've done away with.

WBP: Yeah.

WAILLY: Darned right. I'm glad to see that, buddy,
really.

WBP: Yeah.

Is there anything else that you can think of
that gave you pleasure about working in the mine?
I mean that made you want to put up with the hard
work and . . .

WAILLY: Oh, well, naw, really I loved it, honestly!
I did.

WBP: It was just . . . you . . .

WAILLY: Well, I tell you what. You felt better because
you got a lot of exercise down below. I mean a lot
of it.

WBP: You were tired at the end of the day and slept
well . . .

WAILLY: Oooh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: . . . and felt good the next morning?

WAILLY: You bet. Yeah. Yep. But you know what? The
next morning you were still spitting up dirt though.

WBP: Did you cough?

WAILLY: Black. Yeah. Really. (laughs) Ain't that
something?

WBP: Yeah.

WAILLY: Yep. Really.

WBP: I suppose you felt good when you knew that you
could do a full day's work and do a man's job and
earn your money. That made it . . . gave you a good
feeling.

WAILLY: You betcha. Yeah. I'll say. Yep. (heh)

WBP: Was there a skill also that you felt that you
knew and were using? Did you enjoy a certain . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, I . . .

WBP: . . . I mean you had the know-how.

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. I had the know-how, yeah.

WBP: And you were using that. Did that give you
satisfaction?

WAILLY: You bet. Yeah. Really.

WBP: Yeah.

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, I loved the work down the mine.
Yep. I wouldn't want to work on top though. I
mean, you know, these strip mines.

WBP: Um hm.

WAILLY: That's where my card is now -- over here at
. . . (addressing a third party) Hey, Lueila. What's
the name of my local? (chuckles) I can't think of
it. Well . . .

THIRD PARTY: It begins with a "c"?

WBP: Chinook?

THIRD PARTY: Chinook. (laughs)

WAILLY: (simultaneously) Chinook.

WBP: Do you have your card over there?

WAILLY: Yeah. (laughs) Yeah.

Well, you gotta keep your card up. You know.
Might have to go back in the mines. (laughs)

WAILLY: Yeah. I'll be 78 you know, and that's getting too old to work in the mine, isn't it?

WBP: Yeah.

WAILLY: Yes, Chinook.

WBP: Do you remember any strike activities, actions that were particularly bad?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah, I do. I'll tell you where it was bad -- over here at Dixie Bee mine.

WBP: When was that?

WAILLY: Nineteen /hundred/ thirty-one, 'thirty-two. Somewhere along there. Anyhow, they had a picket line there, and, oh, there was a lot of people there. They had to bring in the militia. Yeah. Well, see, there was a fella that was shot from the tippie and . . . they killed one of the pickets, see.

WBP: Oh, really?

WAILLY: And after that, why they killed one of the fellas at the mine.

WBP: Oh, they did? I see.

WAILLY: So, they had to bring in the militia. It's a good thing, really.

WBP: This is in '31 or '32 then?

WAILLY: Somewhere along in there, yeah.

WBP: Now, the militia would later come back into Terre Haute and have martial law?

WAILLY: Naw, naw. That was . . . when we had martial law, that was here in town!

WBP: That was . . .

WAILLY: Stamping mill here.

WBP: Stamping mill.

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. (laughs) Oh, man, that's . . .
 Whew!

WBP: Were you a member of the union at the stamping
 mill?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Did the unions cooperate pretty much? They
 worked together? If one union was out on strike,
 the other union wouldn't question . . .

WAILLY: Naw, naw. No, they wouldn't do that. They
 wouldn't cross a picket line.

WBP: What other trouble did you remember in the coal
 mines during strikes? Do you remember any other
 besides the Dixie Bee?

WAILLY: Well, we went on strike quite a number of times,
 you know. (chuckles) A lot of times we were, you
 know, we weren't even justified for striking. It was
 just . . . hmpf, I can remember during World War I,
 you know. These day people -- these mule drivers --
 they'd throw their water out, you know, and holler
 "home go!" and everybody'd clock (go home).

WBP: What'd they do? Just . . .

WAILLY: Just . . . maybe they got drunk over the week-
 end, you know. And on Monday they'd [be] feelin'
 bad and . . .

WBP: They didn't want to work so they figured they
 didn't want anybody else to work either?

WAILLY: Right! Yeah. They done that a number of times.

WBP: What did you . . . what do you think about
 management in the mines in those days? Was manage-
 ment fair or was management trying to get all they
 could out of you?

WAILLY: Well, yeah, I think they were fair. You know. {chuckles} After all, they had the union to contend with, you know. Yeah. There wasn't too much trouble around the coal mines. Sometimes there was but it wasn't too bad.

But I still loved my work. Really, I did.

WBP: You said . . . you talk almost as though that the union was sometimes unfair, that they would . . .

WAILLY: No, not the union itself. It was the fellas that . . . like I was telling you there about holler-ing "home go" for just nothing. They'd be already on that train, you know, ready to go, and /then they would/ holler "home go" and throw their water out, and everybody'd follow.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: That's no good, really.

WBP: That's right.

What about John L. Lewis? Did you ever meet him?

WAILLY: No, not personally. He was a good man though, really.

WBP: Do you think that he spoke out for the rights of the miners?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah, yeah.

WBP: And was a strong . . .

WAILLY: Yeah. Very good.

WBP: Were the miners . . . did they . . . were the strikes in 1946 justified in your view?

WAILLY: Well, sometimes I kinda questioned {chuckles} it. At times, yeah. But . . .

WBP: You would have preferred not to strike?

WAILLY: Yeah, well, you know . . . like when the government took over the mines, why we had to work for Uncle Sam. You know, we were just the same as in the army. They told us to go to work and we'd better go.

WBP: What'd you think of that?

WAILLY: Well, that's all right.

WBP: It was all right. At least you were working.

WAILLY: There was a lot worse. Guys were out there fighting, you know. And we were going on strike and, you know, for hardly nothing. Yeah. I think it was a good thing for the government to take over the mines.

WBP: You may have been talking about World War II during 1943.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: In 1943 there were some strikes, too, weren't there?

WAILLY: 'Forty-three?

WBP: During the war.

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Is that what you were thinking of? Harold Ickes . . .

WAILLY: Maybe it is, yeah.

WBP: If Harold Ickes was Secretary of the Interior . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, he was Secretary of the Interior, yeah.

WBP: . . . it would have been in 1943 during the war. And he would have . . .

WAILLY: Yeah. That's when it was.

WBP: And you said that they were out fighting. If they were fighting, you probably should be working.

WAILLY: Yeah. Good.

WBP: So, you're not talking about during the /Harry S./ Truman administration?

WAILLY: Yeah, during Truman administration, too!

WBP: During Truman . . .

WAILLY: Yeah, we . . .

WBP: There was no fighting going on then.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Until 1950.

WAILLY: Yeah. This was during Truman and . . .

WBP: Right after the war.

WAILLY: Well, no, it was during the war.

WBP: Well, you see . . .

WAILLY: Truman.

WBP: The war was over in '45.

WAILLY: 'Forty-five.

WBP: Truman was the president in 1945 . . .

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: . . . but not until 1945. He became president right after /Franklin D./ Roosevelt died in '45.

WAILLY: Yeah. The reason why I remember, he was in Florida when we went on strike, and he went down in a submarine.

WBP: Hm.

WAILLY: Yeah. I remember that part of it.

WBP: I see. So that was . . . that may have been another . . .

WAILLY: But we went on strike a number of times when we didn't have any business striking, really.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: It was a . . . why do you think you went on strike then?

WAILLY: Well, it was just like I was telling you a while ago. Some fellas holler "home go," you know, and we'd follow suit. That's no good.

WBP: Yeah. That's right.

WAILLY: I didn't agree with it, anyhow.

WBP: Tell me about the Columbian Enameling. What did you do there?

WAILLY: I . . . you know when I quit the mines then?

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: I said I quit, but I didn't

WBP: Well, you said you quit . . .

WAILLY: Well, I . . . you know how enamelware is made, don't you?

WBP: I think so.

WAILLY: Well, anyhow, I put it in the furnace and pulled it out with a fork, you know.

WAILLY: Yeah, I started there in 1923. I worked there 'til '30, 1930.

WBP: You were there then when the Depression hit?

WAILLY: Well . . . well, yeah, part of it. Right in the very beginning of the Depression, I guess. Yeah.

WBP: How many people did they employ there when you were there? Do you know that?

WAILLY: Well, at one time right around 1800, I think.

WBP: Was that . . .

WAILLY: In the whole plant, see.

WBP: Was that work easier than working in the mine?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: You weren't digging and shoveling and . . .

WAILLY: No, but I still . . .

WBP: . . . loading coal?

WAILLY: . . . got homesick for the mine though. Really.
(laughs)

WBP: Did you?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Do you remember the union at the Columbian Enameling?

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, I was there when they organized it.
(laughs) Yeah. Sure.

WBP: Do you remember the year that the union organized the Columbian Enameling?

WAILLY: No, I don't. But I was right there though.
(chuckles)

WBP: Were the wages pretty good there?

WAILLY: They were pretty fair, yeah. What I was doing anyhow. But, I don't know, there in . . . I forget what year . . . but anyhow their wages were very low.

WBP: Oh, they were?

WAILLY: As low as 25 cents an hour.

WBP: Oh, is that right?

WAILLY: Yeah, 25 cents an hour.

WBP: That was before unionization or after?

WAILLY: Well, before. Yeah. You know that's too bad. Two dollars a day for eight hours, you know, that's baaad, boy.

WBP: But you stayed there quite a while.

WAILLY: Yeah, I did.

WBP: From 1923 to '31 or so.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: How could you live on that little money?

WAILLY: I was making good money.

WBP: Oh, you were?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yep. I was on piece work, see?

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: The more enamelware I burnt, you know, the more I made.

WBP: I see. Who was getting the 25¢ an hour?

WAILLY: Well, there was quite a number of people there were. There was a lot of piece work there, though.

WAILLY: The girls in the dipping room, even they made pretty good wages.

WBP: On piece work?

WAILLY: Piece work, uh-huh.

WBP: But so . . . do you know . . . was the work at Columbian . . . the furnace there, was that hot work?

WAILLY: Yeah, it was hot. Yeah. We had air pipes that blew on it, see.

WBP: Were the work . . .

END OF TAPE

TAPE 2

WBP: We're talking about working conditions in Columbian Enameling company between 1923 and 1931. And you're saying that during this period there were piece work workers who could earn considerably more than the wage earners? Wage earners . . .

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: . . . earning 25 cents an hour.

WAILLY: Uh-huh.

WBP: And during this time . . . during the time '23 to '31, the Columbian stamping mill was unionized? Was organized during that time? Or was it organized already when you went to work there?

WAILLY: No, no, no. It wasn't organized. No.

WBP: Were you active in the union? Did you help to organize it?

WAILLY: Sort of. Yeah.

WBP: You helped to organize it?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: And were there any strikes there during that period while you were there?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah, that's when the big strike come on there.

WBP: Which big strike?

WAILLY: In . . . aw, I forget when it was. (aside)
You remember when the strike at the stamping mill was, Luella?

MRS. WAILLY: No, I don't.

WBP: Are you talking about the one that finally they had to declare martial law?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: That was in /19/35.

WAILLY: In '35. Well, I went back to work there in '35. I worked there, I don't know, about a month or so.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: And then . . .

WBP: And you were working there at the time of the strike?

WAILLY: No, I didn't work. I went on the picket line.

WBP: But you . . . I know. But you worked until the time . . .

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. But . . . I didn't work too long that time. I quit the coal mine in 1923 until 1931 . . . or 1930, which was it?

WBP: You said '31.

WAILLY: 'Thirty-one. Then I worked at the stamping mill all that time.

WBP: O.K.

Now, do you feel that the strike was justified in 1935? The stamping mill.

WAILLY: Yes, I do. Really.

WBP: Was the strike caused by some management action? Do you remember?

WAILLY: No. One thing, they were paying too low a wages to some people. You know.

WBP: So, it was a strike for higher wages?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: It wasn't a strike for better working conditions?

WAILLY: Well, maybe conditions, too, you know. Yeah.

WBP: Had they . . . had the stamping mill . . . had they been cutting wages, or cutting piece work?

WAILLY: Yeah, they cut wages. No, I wasn't . . . I don't remember /their/ cutting the piece work. We were working by the ton, you know, by the weight. The burning of the ware.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: Naw. During that time that I worked there, I didn't do bad, really. Honest.

WBP: Was there a lot of violence during the strike, the general strike of 1935?

WAILLY: Nooo. No. It's . . . the mill, they did hire . . . I don't know, they hired thugs, I think, from around Chicago.

WBP: They brought in thugs?

WAILLY: Yeah. The company did, really.

WBP: To beat up workers?

WAILLY: Well . . . I don't think they beat up anybody,
no.

WBP: What'd they hire thugs . . .

WAILLY: They would have if the people would have gone on
their property, you know. They even had machine guns
on tripods there.

WBP: At the Columbian stamping . . .

WAILLY: Right on their grounds, yeah.

WBP: After the strike?

WAILLY: During the strike.

WBP: During the strike. After the workers went out
on strike?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

Yeah, it got kinda violent, you know. But I
don't think them guys would have used them machine
guns, do you? Not on the people!

WBP: Do you remember how long the strike lasted?

WAILLY: No, I don't. Really. It . . . they went back
to work, and the company didn't recognize the union,
see.

WBP: Did the company ever recognize the union after
they went back to work?

WAILLY: I think they did in time, but I didn't go back
there.

WBP: Do you remember how long martial law was in
effect?

WAILLY: No, I don't. But it was in effect quite a while.

WBP: About six months, I think.

WAILLY: About six months.

Yeah, they used a lot of tear gas.

WBP: Did you get tear gased?

WAILLY: Well, we got it here, yeah. From 19th Street.

WBP: Did you?

WAILLY: Yeah. You know, we'd get the wind from the west, and, boy, we'd Honest we did!

WBP: That mill was located where?

WAILLY: Over there on Beech Street and 19th.

WBP: Beech and 19th?

WAILLY: Well, it goes clear to 15th.

WBP: So you could . . . did you live right here in this house at the time?

WAILLY: Right here, yeah.

WBP: You lived in this house from when to when? When did you move into this house?

WAILLY: Nineteen /hundred/ twenty-six?

WBP: Three years after . . .

WAILLY: No. Nineteen /hundred/ twenty-seven.

WBP: 'Twenty-seven.

WAILLY: No. When I got married.

WBP: You moved into this house when you got married?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Where did you meet your wife? In church?

WAILLY: Yeah. (laughs heartily) Yeah. (continues laughing) That's a good place to meet a woman.

WBP: I'd say.

WAILLY: You bet.

WBP: During the time that you lived in Terre Haute, what are the most important changes you feel have taken place in Terre Haute?

WAILLY: Oh, I don't know. I think . . . I think they ought to have left the streetcars on.

WBP: They should have left the streetcars on?

WAILLY: Yeeesaaah. I do.

WBP: What did you like about the streetcars?

WAILLY: Well, you could ride for a nickel. (laughs) Remember?

WBP: Yes. Well, I don't remember them, but I know . . .

WAILLY: Oh, you don't?

WBP: I've talked to people who do. I remember streetcars in Indianapolis when I was a child. I don't think I ever came down here when I was a child.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: What about . . . is there . . . you had mentioned the Hippodrome. Were there more things to do in Terre Haute?

WAILLY: Oh, I don't know, but . . .

WBP: Back in the '20s, and '30s . . .

WAILLY: Yeah. I don't think there was, but you know when you're young, you enjoy life. You know. And anything's good when you're young. Yeah.

Well, when we lived in Clinton, I would come to Terre Haute on Saturday night and go to the show. Mostly the Hippodrome.

WBP: Did you ever go to the Indiana theater?

WAILLY: Oh, well, that was later on. When they built that, we lived here in Terre Haute.

WBP: Nineteen /hundred/ twenty-one.

WAILLY: Yeah. 'Twenty-one?

WBP: They built it in '21, I believe.

WAILLY: Ooooh. I thought they built it in '22.

WBP: Well, maybe they did.

WAILLY: I thought we were here when they . . .

WBP: 'Twenty-one or 'twenty-two. It's pretty close in there. I'm not sure. But go ahead. I interrupted you.

WAILLY: Hah. What was I talking about?

WBP: We were talking about the Hippodrome.

WAILLY: The Hippodrome. And the Indiana, yeah. The Indiana though, it . . . you say it was 1921 it was built? I don't think so, really.

WBP: Really? You think it was '22?

WAILLY: 'Twenty-two, I thought.

WBP: Maybe it was. Maybe it was. /The Indiana was built in 1921 and formally opened in 1922./

WAILLY: And . . . I used to go there quite often. The Indiana. Mostly, it was the Hippodrome when we lived in Clinton, though.

Then we'd go to . . . Sunday morning I'd go to Sunday School over on 16th Street over there. That's north of Elizabeth. You know where that church is?

WBP: I don't believe I do.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Is it still there?

WAILLY: Yeah, it's still there. Only now it's a brick church.

WBP: Were there a lot of miners who lived around this area where you live?

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Uh-huh.

WBP: This is a mining community here?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

WBP: Was it a mixed . . . from mixed background? You're from France.

WAILLY: Yeah, there was a lot of other nationalities.

WBP: Such as?

WAILLY: Well, Hungarians and Germans and . . . oh, you know, Scotsmen, Irish, English . . .

WBP: Were many of them first generation just as you were that came over . . . they came over themselves?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. A lot of them could hardly speak English, for that matter. (chuckles)

WBP: Did they all socialize together or did they live in separate neighborhoods? Or did they live next to each other? In other words, would you have a Frenchman and a German and an Italian living together . . . next

WBP: to each other? Or would they all . . .

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah. They were mixed.

WBP: They were scattered out?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Mixed together and they didn't live . . .

WAILLY: Mixed together, right.

WBP: All right. Uh-huh.

WAILLY: Everybody got along with different nationalities.
I think that was nice, that part of it. We should.
Don't you think?

WBP: Yeah. I think so.

WAILLY: You bet.

WBP: What about in Clinton? There was an Italian
community up there, right?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: There were more Italian than anything else.

WAILLY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

WBP: How do you account for that? Was that already
there when you moved?

WAILLY: Yeah. We were already there.

WBP: You were already there?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: It was kind of their own . . . they had settled
that, and they had formed their own kind of community.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WAILLY: Well, I don't know. I kind of love it here, really.

WBP: Did the political . . . have you ever been active in politics?

WAILLY: You want to know what I am? I'm a Democrat.
(laughs)

WBP. I bet I know. Yeah. (laughs)

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Have you been active . . . I mean . . . were you . . .

WAILLY: Noooo. I'm not active.

WBP: You just voted Democrat?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. I'm not active. (chuckles)

WBP: Most of the people who were in the mines, were they Democratic?

WAILLY: I think so.

WBP: How about at Columbian Enameling? Were those people Democrats?

WAILLY: Well, I don't know about them. I . . . heh . . .

WBP: Were they . . . were the miners Democratic before Franklin Roosevelt? Or after?

WAILLY: Well, now John L. Lewis, he turned Republican you know? Yeah.

WBP: Is that right?

WAILLY: Yeah. He did. Yeah.

WBP: Were you . . . was your father a Democrat?

WAILLY: Yeah. My brother, he was a Democrat, too. And they wanted him to turn Republican, you know. And they tied him to a tree out in the woods. (laughs)

WBP: They did?

WAILLY: (laughs) And they told him they was going to leave him tied there 'til he'd turn Republican.

WBP: Who tied him to the tree?

WAILLY: A bunch of the fellas. He was a preacher, see? Methodist preacher.

WBP: Uh-huh.

WAILLY: In Kentucky. But they come back and untied him.

WBP: Hmm.

Why did you join the Democratic party?

WAILLY: Oh, I don't know. I just . . . I don't know. I thought that . . . well, Roosevelt you know . . . look what he done. He got the country out of the deep Depression we had. And it was bad, very bad. You don't remember that, do you?

WBP: No. Tell me. What do you remember about the Depression?

WAILLY: The Depression . . . oh, I tell you . . . I had a family. And money wasn't circulating at all. Did you know that? Really. And, well, that's when we had that mine there south of Cloverland. Well, you know people . . . you know, when we had the mine why they had . . . like you'd sell coal to a slaughter house, they'd wanted to trade it out in meat. If you sold coal to anywhere that were in business, you know, they wanted you to take it out in trade, see. Why you couldn't do that! You had to have money to operate you know.

WBP: Sure.

WAILLY: So . . . well (chuckles), it was terrible, that's all.

WBP: What did you do?

WAILLY: Well, we did, we traded some. But then, good gosh, we just couldn't do it. We had to have money. Then, well . . . you know, we still belonged to the union -- the fellas, you know, working at the mine. We didn't have a local of our own, see. We belonged to a union here in town -- /the/ coal miners' union. 'Cause if you . . . there was one fellow over there that wouldn't hire any union man (chuckles), you know. They picketed the place and stopped him from working.

WBP: Did they?

WAILLY: Jones. Over at Cloverland. He was straight across from us there, across the road.

WBP: Where's Cloverland?

WAILLY: It's between here and Brazil.

WBP: In Vigo County?

WAILLY: Cloverland is in Clay County.

WBP: Clay County.

WAILLY: Right on the other side of the county line, Cloverland is.

WBP: Vigo County-Clay County line?

WAILLY: Right. Uh-huh. Yeah.

WBP: Was that block coal? Or was that . . .

WAILLY: No, no, no. That was bituminous. It was No. 3 coal. In fact, it cropped out over there, the coal did, the bituminous. The block coal starts in, you know.

WBP: What does No. 3 coal mean? What does that stand for?

WAILLY: Well, you see your top vein here, around here is No. 5; No. 4, lower; then No. 3. That's about all you've got around here -- No. 3. Then it crops out further east you go. And then the block coal starts in.

WBP: O.K. Now, what do those numbers stand for?

WAILLY: Well, the different veins.

WBP: Is it a different quality coal?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah. It's a different quality coal. Really.

WBP: What's the best?

WAILLY: Well, No. 6 is . . . well, I don't know. It's good coal, too, though. And No. 5 . . . there're all good steam coal you know. Good, hot coal. Then the further down south you go, you have No. 7, you know, /and/ No. 8 where it isn't coal yet even, you know. It's formed like coal but it isn't coal yet. What is it they call that? You know, I forget what call that.

WBP: It hasn't gone through the change that's necessary.

WAILLY: Right.

WBP: I'm not sure whether . . .

WAILLY: It's got all the elements of coal, you know, but it's not been there enough years.

WBP: I see.

WAILLY: 'Cause, you know, in a coal mine you can find all sorts of things, you know, in the coal and in the slate. Like ferns . . .

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: . . . the imprints of ferns and all these little shells, oyster shells So you know there had to be water for it to be in the coal and the slate. Probably quite a few years ago.

WBP: Do you remember soup lines during the Depression?

WAILLY: Oh, boy, yes! Yeah.

WBP: Did you ever have . . . were you ever to the point that you had to . . .

WAILLY: No.

WBP: . . . go there?

WAILLY: Huh-uh. No. Not through soup lines.

WBP: What did you and your wife do to get . . .

WAILLY: Well, we got some of this canned meat that they had. It was pretty good, too.

WBP: Lived on that some?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Who supplied that?

WAILLY: The United States.

WBP: Government?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: The government did that.

WAILLY: Yeah. Yep.

You know what though . . . what happened . . . a lot of the older folks then lost their money in the banks that they had been saving all their lives, you know, to retire on. 'Cause they didn't have any pensions then. And I've seen quite a few people that

WAILLY: were hurt by that. You know, it just broke their heart on it; they were weakened. Oh, boy!

Then they got the money situation straightened out, you know. Roosevelt shut all the banks down. But you . . . oh, you don't remember, do you?

WBP: I've read about that.

WAILLY: Well, from then on, your money was . . . if you saved a nickel, why it was guaranteed. Government would stand back of it. It's still guaranteed now, you know. You betcha. That's good!

WBP: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The F.D.I.C.

WAILLY: All right. That's good.

And I had some relatives, old French people, that . . . well, they were going to retire, you know, on what they had in the bank. They lost every bit of it!

WBP: Oh, my goodness!

WAILLY: Yeah. Well, they couldn't get it back. Some of them got a percentage of it back.

WBP: Did the Democratic party . . . did the party workers help look after people?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Did they?

WAILLY: Yeah. Right away.

WBP: What did they do?

WAILLY: Well, they started this W.P.A. /Works Progress Administration/ you know and P.W.A. /Public Works Administration/ and /F./ E.R.A. /Federal Emergency Relief Administration/. . .

WBP: That provided jobs for people?

WAILLY: They provided jobs, yeah, and they done a lot of good.

WBP: Well, what about the local party? Did they help? Did they provide assistance for people who . . .

WAILLY: Well, yeah. The township trustees, you mean? They were in on it, too. Yeah. Yeah. Aw, that was a good thing that happened there with Roosevelt. Then he put a lot of these young boys, you know, into the C.C.C. /Civilian Conservation Corps/.

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: And all of that started the ball rolling, you know. It helped like everything.

WBP: Were there local . . . do you remember local party officials who kind of made decisions for the party around here? In Vigo County? Terre Haute, Vigo County? Was there a local, say a precinct committee-man who would check on people and make . . .

WAILLY: Oh, you mean check on . . . like your township trustees and so on?

WBP: Maybe.

WAILLY: They needed to do that, I'll tell you that.

WBP: Did they?

WAILLY: Yeah. Because when I had my truck there, I hauled some of the coal, you know, in this township here.

WBP: Um hm.

WAILLY: And they . . .

WBP. This is Harrison Township, isn't it?

WAILLY: Yeah, Harrison Township. And you got 50¢ a ton, see, for hauling coal here in town. And that was good

WAILLY: money then. No kidding!

But . . . maybe I better not say anything about
it. (chuckles)

WBP: I'm sure it won't matter. It doesn't matter at
this point.

WAILLY: No.

WBP: It's long past, isn't it?

WAILLY: Yeah, it's long past but then there might be some
repercussions though!

WBP: Is the Democratic party pretty well organized?

WAILLY: Yeah. They were here, yeah.

Well, I don't like the rottenness that's in it.
That's what . . . you know that?

WBP: How do you mean?

WAILLY: Well, like when they were doing business with the
storekeepers there -- anybody that's done business
with them, you know. Ah, I heard a lot of that went
on.

WBP: Some kickbacks.

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah.

I think I even got some kickbacks on hauling coal.
So I didn't give it back. I kept it. Yeah. I even
took coal to people that were . . . old people were in
bed because they didn't have any fuel at all for their
heating the stove, you know.

WBP: This was during the Depression?

WAILLY: Yeah. Boy, that was terrible! Whew!

Yeah, that's too bad. Things got to get in that

WAILLY: bad a shape. Yeah, I was . . . I think Roosevelt was a . . . I don't know, I think he was a good man at heart. Really, I do. 'Cause he had the poor people at heart.

Look what Hoover done! He had the same chance, and you know . . . maybe you're Republican. But then nevertheless, when Roosevelt got in, he started the ball rolling, you know.

WBP: Yes, he did.

But you'd been a Democrat before that, right?

WAILLY: Yeah. Uh-huh, yeah.

WBP: Was the Democratic party well organized before the Depression here? Do you know?

WAILLY: Well, I think so. Yeah.

WBP: How would you . . . what evidence is there that they were pretty well organized? Do you know?

WAILLY: No, I don't know that. But I wasn't too active with politics. I never was.

WBP: Would they check to make sure you voted?

WAILLY: Well, yeah, that part of it. Yeah, they . . .

WBP: Would come around . . .

WAILLY: . . . they'd come around and get you, yeah. (laughs)

WBP: Take you to the polls?

WAILLY: Yeah. Yeah, they did that. Sure.

WBP: Did they have any kind of a welfare fund that would help people that were needy? The party itself? The local party?

WAILLY: You mean Republicans or . . .

WBP: The Democrats.

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Did they?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Did they . . . would they supply coal if they needed help?

WAILLY: Yeah.

WBP: Would they supply a food basket if you needed some food, that kind of thing -- clothes?

WAILLY: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, that's . . . oh, I saw some heartbreaking things. Oh, gosh! It's pitiful what people went through in those years. Terrible! Whew!

But . . . (chuckles) I got a job at . . . not Cincinnati but across the river -- Newport, Kentucky. You've heard of that, haven't you?

WBP: Yes.

WAILLY: I got a job driving a truck there for a fella something like Hulman. [The Hulman Company] And he . . . he'd order a bunch of boxes of groceries, you know, and put the addresses on them and told me to deliver them at the addresses and not try to collect for the groceries. He knew they didn't have the money.

WBP: Um hm.

WAILLY: So, you should see the houses I took those groceries to. Man! Those people looked like they were millionaires, really! And yet they didn't have enough to eat.

WBP: Is that right?!

WAILLY: Right. Newport, Kentucky.

WBP: Huh. Beautiful, fine houses, but they didn't have anything to eat.

WAILLY: Right!

WBP: Good heavens! This is during the '30s.

WAILLY: Well, this fellow . . . he was an alcoholic even; but boy, he was big-hearted as everything, really.

WBP: Good heavens!

WAILLY: Oooooooh, my back, my back.

WBP: [Is] your back hurting now?

WAILLY: Oh, yeeeah, man!

WBP: Well, you've had a full life, but it's been a hard life it seems to me. You've worked pretty hard.

WAILLY: Well, yeah, but then work's good for you. I loved to work, really.

WBP: Um hm.

When you owned your own mine, was that for ten years?

WAILLY: No, it wasn't for ten years. No. I forget just how long we had it.

WBP: Did it . . . you and three other men? You and two other men?

WAILLY: Two.

WBP: Two other men?

WAILLY: Yeah.

Boy, I'm having spasms. Do you know what that is?

WBP: Are you? Are you?

WAILLY: Did you ever get spasms in your back?

WBP: Yes, I have.

WAILLY: Boy, that's Oh, man! Don't it hurt
though?

WBP: Yeah.

WAILLY: Boy! It's excruciating.

WBP: Would you like to stop now?

WAILLY: If you don't mind.

WBP: That'd be fine.

I certainly appreciate this. It's been a good
interview.

END OF TAPE

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